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Fabian Tract No. 177.

SOCIALISM AND THE ARTS OF USE.

By A. CLUTTON BROCK.

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Socialism and the Arts of Use.

Government and the Arts of Use.

The question whether Socialism is likely to encourage or to discourage art is of practical importance to Socialists because many people believe that it would make an end of all art, and are therefore opposed to it. Their belief is based upon the fact that our present Government is seldom successful when it tries to encourage art. They point to our Government offices, our memorials to deceased monarchs, and the work of our art schools, as examples of Socialist art, and they ask whether that is better than the art produced in answer to a private demand.

Certainly it is not; and the Government failure in the matter of architecture has aroused a very strong prejudice against Socialism among architects. They practise the most important of all the arts, and they tell us, from their own experience, that the Government is usually unfortunate in its choice of architects and that it prevents them from doing their best after it has chosen them. This I do not deny—one has only to look at our Government buildings to see that it must be true—but these opponents of Socialism assume that in a Socialist State all art would be at the mercy of the conscious patronage of the Government. They do not ask themselves whether in a Socialist State there might not arise conditions as favorable to the natural growth of architecture and all the arts of use as our present conditions are unfavorable. They assume that those arts, in the modern world, can only be kept alive by the abnormal interest of a few individuals, and they think that Socialism would deprive those few of their power of patronage.

Socialism will not Produce an Immediate Improvement.

This assumption I believe to be wrong. Socialism might destroy the patronage of the abnormal few; but it might also make an interest in art, and particularly in the arts of use, normal. And my aim now is to explain why I believe it would do this.

But first I will admit that, if we could suddenly start now with any complete system of Socialism in full working order, I do not for a moment believe we should have an immediate improvement in our pictures or Government offices or public statues or in the memorials to deceased monarchs. There would, no doubt, be more money spent upon public art and less upon private; but the public art for a time would be just what it is now, and the artists chosen would be those who have an ill-deserved eminence in our present society. It is the general taste that makes art good or bad. It does not produce artists of genius, but it uses them or wastes them.

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Whistler said that art happens, by which he meant, I suppose, that people like himself happen : that no society, by taking thought, can cause them to be born. But it is not true that works of art, like Bourges Cathedral, happen, any more than Dreadnoughts happen. They are the results of a long, common, and well directed effort. That kind of effort does not exist now, and in the most favorable circumstances it could only begin slowly, and would continue for some time before it could produce any great results.

Art Manifests Itself First not in Ornament but in Design.

At present the art of building and the art of all objects of use is commonly supposed to be an art of ornament. Architecture means to most of us a kind of ornamented building. Gothic is distinguished from Renaissance by its ornament, by traceried windows and cusps and crockets and so on ; and we are always complaining that we have no style of our own in architecture or furniture or anything else.

But the artistic instinct when it works in the making of objects of use does not first show itself in ornament, but in structure, and it may express itself triumphantly without any ornament.

The artistic instinct, when it first begins to move in the making of an object of use, is not consciously artistic at all. It shows itself mainly in a desire to make that object as well as it can be made, and of the closest possible adaptation to its function. But this desire must be in itself disinterested if it is to produce art. It pays, no doubt, at least in healthy societies, to make things as well as they can be made. But the artistic instinct will not grow out of a mere desire to make them well so that they may sell. For the next stage in the development of that instinct is a recognition of the beauty of a thing that is well adapted to its function ; from which follows an effort to insist upon that beauty for its own sake while at the same time preserving the perfect adaptation to function. It is upon this recognition and this effort that all architectural excellence depends, and indeed all excellence of design. When art is growing and vigorous, it is because men see the natural functional beauty of the things which they make for use and because they try to increase that beauty, perhaps with ornament but certainly with pure design, which does not disguise function but emphasizes it. But the beauty must be seen before it can be heightened with art.

The Recognition of Functional Beauty.

We are amazed at the beauty of the great French Gothic cathedrals, and we think of it as a romantic thing of the past that we can never attain to. But how did the builders of the Middle Ages attain to it? Not in the least by their facility in designing and carving ornament ; not by their tracery or stained glass or statues. Those things were only the overflow of their energy. A church might have them and yet be bad. It might lack them all, even the stained glass, and yet be noble. What they did was to be aware of the natural functional beauty of a plain building well

built, and to see how that beauty might be heightened and emphasized step by step, until they attained to the cathedrals of Bourges and Chartres. All the time their building was engineering, and a great part of its beauty remained engineering or functional beauty, a beauty like that of a fine animal or a great tree. This functional beauty was at last almost perfectly fused with expressive art in the greatest French churches, but both beauties were always present up to the climax of Gothic. And in that great age of art which culminated in the thirteenth century, there is the same artistic impulse applied to most objects of use that have come down to us from that age. It is altogether an architectural age, an age of design, one which recognized the functional beauty of its handiwork and tried to emphasize it. And so it has been in other ages famed for their prevailing artistic excellence. The Chinese pottery of the Sung dynasty, for instance, has often no ornament at all; the beauty consists in the exquisite refinement of form, which is always expressive of function, and in the exquisite quality of glaze, which, like the form, had first a functional purpose. It was merely recognition of the beauties of a well-made pot and a desire to improve upon them which produced those miracles of art.

Now the societies which produced this wonderful art were not Socialist according to our ideas; but they had one condition necessary to the vigor of art which our present society almost entirely lacks, and which we can regain, I believe, only by means of Socialism. For it was possible with them for men to build buildings and to make objects of use as well as they could build them or make them, and so it was possible for them to recognize the beauty of such things and to refine upon it generation after generation and man by man. The great churches, whether built for a monastery or for a city, were not built to pay. The Sung pottery was made to sell, but it was made by individual potters for customers who recognized its beauty like the potters themselves, and who therefore encouraged the potters to do their best and to refine and refine until they reached the unequalled height of excellence. I do not suppose that with Socialism our whole system of production would be altered at once, or that we should have pottery like the Sung instead of our present crockery. But let us consider for a moment the manner in which most of our modern buildings are built and most of our more important objects of use are made. I am not now speaking of the objects which we think of as artistic, such as churches or public buildings, but rather of private buildings of all kinds, of lamp posts, pillar boxes, trams, railway bridges and viaducts and stations. Such things are more numerous and important in our lives, they are often larger and more conspicuous, than objects of use have been in any former civilization.

With Us the Art of Design is Checked from the Start.

Yet we never think of all these important objects of use as works of art or as capable of becoming works of art. We never recognize any beauty in them to begin with, and of course we do not attempt

to refine upon the beauty which we do not recognize. If any designer of such things saw beauty in them and tried to increase it in a new design, he would be asked at once if the new design were more expensive than the old and if it had any greater practical value. And if it were more expensive and had no more practical value, he would be warned, if he were not dismissed at once as a lunatic, not to waste his time or his employers' money. With us the art of design is checked at its very start by the general attitude towards all objects of use, since for us they are merely objects of use, and so we never think of looking for any beauty in them whatever. According to our present notion, art is art and business is business; the first is unbusinesslike and the second inartistic, and that is the plain commonsense of the matter.

Machinery is not Necessarily Hostile to Art.

Now that is quite a modern notion and most people believe that it prevails because we live in an age of machinery; that things made by machinery cannot be beautiful and that therefore it is useless to attempt to heighten their beauty. But on this point there is a great confusion of thought. There was a sudden decay of all the arts of design which began about 1790 and was complete by about 1840. And this happened at the same time as the great increase in the use of machinery. Also in that period there was a production of machine-made ornament of all kinds which did help to destroy the production of hand-made ornament and to corrupt the design of all ornament, whether machine or hand-made. Now I will not lay it down as an absolute dogma that all machine-made ornament must be bad. But it is certainly a fact that most of it is bad and not ornament at all but mere excrescence. Yet to say that is not to say that all machine-made things are necessarily ugly or that they cannot have the same functional beauty as other objects of use. The fact is that the sense of functional beauty was weakening just when machinery began to prevail. It was not that machinery destroyed art or made it impossible, but that we have made a wrong artistic use of machinery and have failed to see its artistic possibilities. Our great mechanical inventions were made just when, for other reasons, art was at its weakest. Therefore, so far as art has been concerned with them at all, they have been used merely to produce imitations of the art of the past. If art had been vigorous it would have mastered machinery instead of being mastered by it. As it is, machinery was used to imitate art, because, since ornament was anyhow ceasing to be expressive, it could be produced just as well by machinery as by hand. With the decay of the sense of design people also lost all sense of the meaning and purpose of ornament. They did not see beauty in what they had made and therefore they tried to add beauty to it instead of drawing beauty out of it. They painted the lily, which is what no one would do who saw that the lily was beautiful to start with.

The significant fact about the decay of the sense of design is that it came with the industrial age, not that it came with machinery.

It came, that is to say, with a new set of ideas, not with a new set of implements. And the idea that was fatal to art was not a refusal to recognize its abstract importance. The dominant capitalists were ready then, as now, to spend money on pictures and other works of art, but they drew a sharp distinction between works of art and objects of use. They might even be ready to add art to objects of use; but they were not ready to draw art out of them. And the reason was, as Morris pointed out long ago, that they were making objects of use to sell, and merely to sell; and that they had no disinterested desire to make them as well as they could be made.

The Ideas of the Industrial Age are Hostile to Art.

I spoke a moment ago of a new set of ideas, but the ideas of the industrial age were really only the result of the complete triumph of one instinct. The instinct of gain became all-powerful, and it assumed, contrary to all experience, that it always had been and always must be all-powerful. That in fact it was the only true instinct concerned with the making of things, and that the artistic instinct was merely a bye-play of idleness. That was why all art was conceived to be ornament, since art itself was thought to be purely ornamental. But art, as I have said, is not ornament but design; and design is the expression of an instinct, the suppression of which destroys all sense of design and with it all the health and vigour of art.

Well, this instinct, to make things as well as they can possibly be made, was suppressed by that other triumphant instinct of gain; and by the instinct of gain working, not in the actual people who made things, but in those who set them to make things; not in the designer or the workman, but in the capitalist. He could not exercise the artist's instinct if he would; it was only possible for him to encourage it in others. And this he did not attempt to do because he conceived of himself merely as a producer of things to sell, competing with other producers. He might honestly try to produce a good article. He might be as moral as you please; but the artistic instinct is not moral. It aims at excellence for its own satisfaction, not through a sense of duty to the public. The conscientious capitalist might try to give his best, but it is not an artistic best. He was never spurred on to make things more beautiful by a recognition of the beauty of what he had made. So, if in the way of trade he wished to produce a beautiful thing, he did not encourage his designers to refine upon their designs, but he imported an artist to ornament them. And that is why we have schools of ornamental art at South Kensington and elsewhere, and why we talk of applied art as if it were something added to things, like a flounce to a dress. And meanwhile no one ever expects an engineer or any kind of practical designer to have any artistic instinct at all. He is a man of business, and business is inartistic as art is unbusinesslike.

The best example I can give of this view of art is a public not a private enterprise, but for that very reason it will enforce the moral I wish to draw.

The Lesson of the Tower Bridge.

The Tower Bridge is a great work of engineering, and while it remained that and only that, it looked like the gates of the sea. But no one recognized its beauty as a work of engineering, that is to say as a piece of design. On the contrary, since it was a public work, it was thought necessary to cover its indecent nakedness with art. So an architect was imported to do this ; and he made it look like two Gothic towers with a bridge between them. Not only are these towers ugly in themselves, but they make the bridge look ugly, partly because of its incongruity, partly because it seems too heavy for the towers, which, of course, do not really support it at all, and have indeed no function whatever except to be artistic.

Now in this case if the engineer had been conscious of the functional beauty of his design, and if he had tried to heighten that beauty and had made a more costly design in doing so, he would no doubt have been told to mind his own business and leave art to artists. It would never have entered into anyone's head that the art of a bridge is the engineer's business just as much as the art of a statue is the sculptor's business. It would not even enter the engineer's head, for he has been taught by public opinion to suppress his own natural artistic instinct just as the engineers of the great Gothic cathedrals were taught to develop it. By nature very likely he was just such a man as they were ; and we may be sure that they would admire his work as much as they would despise the architectural imitations of their own.

The Tower Bridge was not built to pay, but it was built by a public body still subject to all the capitalist ideas about art and its incompatibility with business. Hence the absurd incompatibility of the art and the business of the bridge. We cannot expect those ideas to disappear all in a moment, or that a capitalist, when he acts as a member of a public body, will escape therefore from their influence. The revival of art, if it does come, will be a long and slow business, and it can only happen when the natural artistic instinct is no longer suppressed by the natural instinct of gain and by all the ideas which that instinct of gain, in its evil supremacy, has imposed upon us.

Art is not Necessarily Doomed in Our Civilization.

Our notion about art now is that it is always and everywhere fighting a losing battle, and that it can only be kept alive by the efforts of the cultured few. And there is truth in that so long as the cultured few impose their own conception of art upon a puzzled and indifferent world. Art will only begin to fight a winning battle when the mass of men rediscover it for themselves without even knowing that what they have discovered is art ; when they find that they can take a pleasure and pride in objects of use as natural and instinctive as the pleasure which they take in flowers or trees now.

It is not, I think, merely visionary to hope for such a change ; for men have taken such a pleasure and pride in objects of use, not

once or twice only at favored periods of history, but nearly always until the end of the eighteenth century; and all our present restlessness and discontent about art proves that we feel the want of this pleasure and would regain it if we could. But how could Socialism help us to regain it? Certainly not by any conscious State patronage of art such as we have at present, not by giving us more and more sumptuous memorials to deceased monarchs or larger Government offices designed by scholarly architects, but rather, I think, in a manner which I can best illustrate by examples.

The Case of Waterloo Station.

It is natural to men, as I have said, to recognize the functional beauty of things of use; and our present failure to recognize it is unnatural, and produced not by any decay of the senses, but by a set of ideas and associations which prevent us from using our senses. Let us take, for instance, the case of the new Waterloo Station. That is a piece of engineering which has a very real functional beauty, far more, for instance, than the Hall of the Law Courts. But people see nothing beautiful in it because their eyes are blinded by their ideas about the station; they think of it as a prosaic work of mere utility, built by a prosaic company for its own profit. And this is the view of it which the company themselves take and are forced to take. They never for one moment suppose that their station could be a work of art or could have any beauty, because it is for them merely a means of earning money. They may, for the sake of advertisement, be ready to spend money upon an architectural façade to it, and they may employ an architect to apply some art to that façade. But art means to them, as to most other people, ornament, pilasters and capitals and cornices and mouldings and such things; and they regard it as an advertisement, as a means of drawing attention to their station. But art, being by its nature disinterested, will not live on these terms; and architectural façades of this kind are a mere collection of artistic features that once had life and meaning and now have none whatever. Some are better than others, but there is no growth or development of art in them; and we can look for none so long as the motive which causes money to be spent on art is merely advertisement or even a vague belief that art ought to be patronized.

To the railway company their station is, inevitably, merely an object of use; not only have they no motive for making it beautiful, but they do not even see that it has any beauty. If, for some reason, they were in a lavish mood and determined to spend money upon making it beautiful, they would probably give all the columns Corinthian capitals of wrought iron. Indeed there is an absurd hint at capitals on the top of these columns, and that is the only ugliness in the structure of the station.

But if anyone were to suggest to the directors of the company that their station had already a functional beauty and that they ought to have spent money on emphasizing this functional beauty, that they ought to allow their engineer to indulge his natural

artistic instinct, they would of course reply that their business was to earn dividends, not to spend money on art which no one would recognize.

Art and the Engineer.

All real art, from the point of view of a profit earning company, is sheer waste ; and that is the point of view which has been forced upon all of us, so that we neither see real art in its shy beginnings and possibilities, nor do we expect any money ever to be spent on it.

Waterloo Station, as I have said, has a beauty of its own already. But that beauty tantalizes one with hints and suggestions of a much greater and more conscious beauty that might have been obtained by emphasis of structural features, and could only have been obtained by the designer of the station with his sense of structure. And the art of station design could only grow and develop if one engineer improved upon the design of another, recognizing its beauty and seeing how that beauty might be further increased ; if, in fact, there was incessant experiment of the same kind as that which culminated in the great French cathedrals of the thirteenth century.

We have already incessant experiment in purely engineering problems, but the further artistic experiment cannot even begin. The engineering beauty is there, the designer's instinct to refine upon it must be there, for man's nature has not been utterly changed in a hundred years ; and so, too, the ordinary man's sense of beauty must be there if he could but be aware of it. It is only a certain set of ideas and associations which prevent both designer and public from asserting their instinct and their sense, and these are the ideas and associations of capitalism.

The Relation of Lender and Borrower.

You cannot have a living and growing art unless you are ready to spend money upon it, not as an advertisement or as a luxury, for money so spent will give you merely ornament, but as something which is worth having for its own sake. And no capitalist enterprise will ever spend money upon art in that spirit, nor will the public ever demand that a capitalist enterprise shall do so.

For the buildings or objects of use provided by a capitalist enterprise belong to the capitalists, and the public have no interest in them except in the use they make of them. To the public at present a railway station is a mere convenience, and they ask nothing of it except that it shall be convenient. They take no pride in it, for they have no part or lot in it. They only use it as we use books from a circulating library, in which we have no pride of possession, and of which therefore we expect no beauty either of binding or of type.

Indeed our relation to all works of capitalist enterprise is exactly the relation of subscribers to the books of a circulating library. We use them, but we have no further interest in them ; and that is the reason why we neither recognize any beauty which they may already possess, nor have any desire that that beauty shall be

increased. Under our present system we all, at least those of us who have any money, are subscribers rather than owners ; and the owners themselves are shareholders with no sense of possession, except of dividends. If I own some South Western Railway Stock, I do not feel that Waterloo Station belongs to me, or that I have any interest whatever in making it more beautiful. I enter it not as an owner, but as a subscriber, and I forget my ownership as soon as I begin to travel on the line. So there is no consciousness of ownership anywhere, and ownership itself is a kind of abstraction. No one can say, in any sense or with any meaning, that Waterloo Station is his station. It and a thousand other buildings and objects of use are merely things that people make use of, and we are all living more and more in a world of things with which we have an utterly inhuman and indifferent relation.

Our Artistic Parsimony and How it Might be Removed.

But this relation to things of use, again, is not natural to man. And that other relation, in which men took a pride in them, recognized their beauty, and tried to increase it, was in the past the rule rather than the exception ; and in ages when there was great poverty, when there were plagues, famines, wars, and other disasters, men have not grudged the money necessary to glorify objects of use. That kind of parsimony, which we see everywhere, is peculiar to modern times. And it is the result of our peculiar relation between those who own objects of use and those who use them, a relation always of lender and borrower. If this could come to an end we might confidently expect that our parsimony and indifference would gradually cease. Of course, if our railways were nationalized, we should not all at once begin to feel towards our railway stations as men in the Middle Ages felt towards their cathedrals. Indeed at present we are just as parsimonious and indifferent towards things made by the State as towards those made by private enterprise. No one, for instance, seems to notice the beauty of the trams on the Embankment, or to consider how much more beautiful they might be made ; but that is because public enterprise is still so rare that the ideas associated with private enterprise still cling to it. When the County Council runs trams, we think of it as a private company, and we use the trams without any sense of possession in them, just as we use the 'busses of the London General Omnibus Company. And a public body, too, when it engages in any kind of trade, is still, to itself, a private trader. That is to say, it has the attitude of the private trader towards his own stock in trade, the attitude dictated by competition and by the determination to make as much money as possible. But we may expect, I think, that the more public enterprise prevailed, the more would the influence of private enterprise weaken. The facts would change and the state of mind with them. I do not mean that in this matter of trams, for instance, the County Council would suddenly say, " Our trams must be made more beautiful," and would therefore engage an artist to design them. That is not the way in which art grows. That is the way in

which it is patronized and perverted by connoisseurs. What I do mean is that the County Council and the public itself would gradually begin to take a pride in their tramways. They would no longer think of them merely as money making machines and conveniences. Gradually the tram designer would begin to express his own natural artistic instinct in his design, and he would not be instantly checked by the cry of expense. Then the public would notice his new trams and like their design. They would not say that they were more artistic; they would simply find that they took the pleasure which we all take in a design that expresses function and emphasizes it. Then other designers would notice those improvements and improve upon them, and the public would notice these further improvements and take a pride in them, the people of one town saying to the people of another: "Yes, your Hull trams are well enough, but have you seen our new trams at Halifax? They beat everything." Then the Hull designer would go and look at the Halifax trams, and would be spurred to improve upon them in his next design. And so a new kind of competition would arise in trams and in a thousand other objects of use, or rather that old kind of competition which helped to produce the cathedrals of the Middle Ages, a competition not of cheapness, but of excellence.

Poetry and Prose in Art.

We think of trams and railway stations as very prosaic things, having nothing in common with those cathedrals; and I do not suppose that any great general emotion could express itself in a station as the religious emotion was expressed at Chartres or Bourges. But we, with our loss of art in all things of common use, have acquired a vicious notion that all art must be pure expression, and expression of the highest and most passionate emotions. For us there is nothing between the meanness of a workhouse that looks as if it had been designed by Scrooge, and the irrelevant splendor of a new monster hotel. Both of those have the same defect manifested in different ways; in neither is there any recognition of the beauty of functional design, but one of them tries to make up for it by the use of ornament that is like the flowers of speech of a bad prosaic writer. The good writer of prose knows that it has its beauties too, and that they are spoilt by incongruous poetic ornament. He may not call himself an artist, yet there is art and the beauty of art in his prosaic excellence, in the structure of a sentence which says exactly what it means; and he too recognizing this beauty unconsciously perhaps, is always trying to heighten it. So, whenever art flourishes, there is a recognition of the beauty of all design and an effort to increase it, even though the object designed has no association with the higher emotions. There is in fact a prose of art as well as a poetry, and whenever its poetry is sublime its prose is also beautiful. But we have forgotten that there is a prose of art at all. To us art is all poetry which we plaster irrelevantly on the most prosaic objects as if we were ashamed of them. And indeed we are ashamed of them just because they are prosaic to us, just because we never

recognise or try to heighten their natural beauty of design. In an age of healthy art, objects of use may be the prose of art, but they are not prosaic in one sense, for they are made as beautiful as the emphasis of their function can make them. And design can flouish nowhere unless it flourishes in the prose as well as in the poetry of art. It is not a faculty that a few specially trained artists can suddenly apply to a church or a palace or a Victoria memorial. It is a faculty that must be exercised by all designers and the value of which must be recognized by the public, whether it be applied to churches or palaces, or to railway stations, or to trams or pillar boxes.

What we call design now is all remembered from the art of the past; but art, when it is alive, lives not on the admiration of past art but on discovery. To the artist reality suggests something finer than itself, and yet itself. To the great builders of the Middle Ages a cathedral did not suggest a great avenue of stone, but a finer, more completely organized cathedral—which they proceeded to build. So a railway station should suggest, not some vaguely romantic hall of vapors and hurrying crowds, but a finer, more highly organized railway station, which we too should proceed to build.

There must be a prose of life, but if it becomes merely prosaic to us, merely routine, that is because of our failure to make anything of it. We cannot be always in a high and passionate state of emotion, like the bright seraphim in burning row; and art for us is not all a touching of celestial harps with golden wires. Rather it is, or might be, in the mass of its achievements, a symptom of our triumph over routine in the prose of life. And the peculiar weakness of our present society is that it fails utterly to triumph over this routine, and betrays that failure in all objects of use. For us nearly every object of use is a platitude, and that means that a great part of life itself is a platitude; that in all our commercial and industrial relations with each other we are dominated by a belief, at once platitudinous and untrue, that we must take as much and give as little as we can. Where that belief prevails, there can be no art of design; for the art of design comes into being through the designer's impulse to give more than he need give; and that impulse is checked at once where he works for employers who tell him to give as little as he can.

Machinery and Functional Beauty.

The fact that we make many things with machinery has nothing to do with our failure to recognize their beauty. If things made by machinery could have no functional beauty, machinery would of course be fatal to art, and we should have to make up our minds whether we would give up art or machinery. But, as I have tried to show, many machine-made things have great beauty, and our failure to recognize it is the result merely of associations which prevent us from taking the pleasure we ought to take in such things. An artistic person will, for instance, admire some fantastic, ancient fowl-

ing piece. It is old and highly ornamented, and therefore he thinks of it as a work of art. But he will not admire a modern sporting gun by a good maker because he thinks of it as an article of commerce. And yet the modern gun has a beauty of design, a functional beauty, far beyond that of the old one. It has an almost miraculous elegance, which is heightened, not spoilt, by the precision of the mechanical finish. In this case an extreme beauty has been achieved because the wealthy sportsman does take a pride in his weapon. He does not call it beautiful any more than the people of the Middle Ages called their cathedrals works of art. But without knowing it he recognizes the beauty of fine design and workmanship and is ready to pay for it. So it is also with motor cars, which become more beautiful in design every year. But it is not so with the mass of objects of use which are made for the larger public and it cannot be so as long as the public has no sense of possession of those objects and no control over them, and so long as the designers of them are prevented from expressing their natural sense of design.

We have lost control by an accident, through a conjunction of circumstances that has never happened before in the world's history; and, since Socialism is an effort to regain this control, it is also an effort to produce those conditions which will be favorable to the arts of use. In respect to art it is not a very conscious effort; but the conscious efforts to encourage art have not been very successful. What art wants is not the patronage of superior persons but a fair chance with the ordinary man; and that Socialism would give it, if it gave to the ordinary man a fair chance of enjoying those things which his ancestors enjoyed.

THE FABIAN SOCIETY

11 DARTMOUTH STREET, WESTMINSTER, LONDON, S.W.1.

Those willing to join the Labour Party, or desirous of obtaining information about its Programme and Principles, are invited to communicate with the Secretary of the Fabian Society.

The Fabian Society has been, from the outset, a constituent body of the Labour Party; and membership of the Society carries with it full membership of the Labour Party; eligibility for nomination to all Conferences and Offices, and qualification for Labour Party, candidatures for Parliament and Local Authorities, without obligation to belong to any other organisation.

The Society welcomes as members any persons, men or women, wherever resident, who subscribe to its Basis (set forth below), and who will co-operate in its work according to their opportunities.

BASIS OF THE FABIAN SOCIETY.

(To be signed by all Members.)

(*Adopted May 23rd*, 1919.)

The Fabian Society consists of Socialists.

It therefore aims at the reorganisation of Society by the emancipation of Land and Industrial Capital from individual ownership, and the vesting of them in the community for the general benefit. In this way only can the natural and acquired advantages of the country be equitably shared by the whole people.

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